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FM AMEMBASSY ASMARA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0031  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
AMEMBASSO QDDIS ABABA  
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DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/AF, DS/TIA/ITA, DS/IP/SPC/SO, INR,  
AF/E, LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/26/2028

TAGS: MOPS PGOV PREL ASEC ER IR

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE IRANIAN SUBMARINE IN ASSAB

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald K. McMullen for Reason 1.4 (d)

¶1. (S/NF) An Iranian submarine was reportedly sighted in the port city of Assab on 11/24/08. A reliable embassy source obtained this information on 11/25/08 from a contact who belongs to an unknown Eritrean Army intelligence unit based in Assab. The contact said the submarine visit is widely known in his unit. The friend did not know why the submarine was in Assab, when it arrived, when it would leave, but did state it "was armed." On 11/26/08, the Eritrean government opposition website [www.asenai.com](http://www.asenai.com) also reported an Iranian submarine "armed with missiles" had visited Assab.

¶2. (S/NF) Post Comments: This information has not been corroborated. Post earlier heard that the Assab harbor is silted-in and needs to be dredged to make it a viable port and allow the entrance of ships.

MCMULLEN